

NEWS RELEASE

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Carol A. Murray, Commissioner

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**NEW HAMPSHIRE A LEAD STATE IN THE PLANNED DEPLOYMENT OF 5-1-1
NEW NATIONAL TRAVELER INFORMATION PHONE SERVICE WILL DEBUT THIS YEAR**

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation is leading the three northern New England states within a nation-wide effort to develop and deploy new 511 traveler information phone services this year. The aim is to provide real time information on statewide traffic and roadway conditions for motorists.

"Finding up-to-the-minute travel information will be easier than ever before with new 511 phone services," says New Hampshire Department of Transportation Commissioner Carol Murray. "Like dialing 411 to get a phone number, or calling 911 in an emergency, residents and visitors will be able to get the latest road, weather and traffic reports using the new 511 traveler information number."

Focusing on such areas as road conditions and construction advisories, the new 511 service will provide up-to-the-minute information that will improve both the safety and efficiency of driving in New Hampshire. To fund the initial 511 development, New Hampshire and Vermont have joined a group of seven states from across the country. The multi-state consortium has been awarded \$700,000 by the Federal Highway Administration to help get 511 under way. The federal funds will pay for software development and the initial launch of the 511 traveler information lines.

"Our 511 group literally stretches from Alaska to Maine, and New Mexico to Minnesota," says Peter Davies of Castle Rock Consultants, who is working with the states to develop these new systems. "We are leveraging state and federal resources to get maximum value for New England motorists."

New Hampshire, Maine and Vermont have already developed statewide road reporting databases that will drive the 511 phone information service. CARS (the Condition Acquisition and Reporting System) is a multi-state database of roadway events such as construction, road conditions and traffic delays that operates over the Internet. Highway maintenance staff or State Police dispatchers will likely be responsible for updating the traffic and roadway conditions.

"The existing CARS database will allow 511 to be operated across New Hampshire using state of the art voice telephony systems," says Ansel Sanborn, head of Transportation Planning at the New Hampshire Department of Transportation. "We can offer real time traveler information through this new 511 phone number because of new technologies that make the information service more affordable than ever before."

New Hampshire is also working with Maine and Vermont in a broader program called "Trio", a cooperative effort to develop a regional traveler and tourism information system across Northern New England. The tri-state program is a partnership of three state tourism agencies, three state transportation agencies and the private sector.

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